

Serial No. 10/615,568

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Amendments to the Claims:

1 **1. (Currently Amended)** Multi-bridge for use in a network that contains a
2 plurality of subnetworks, wherein the multi-bridge comprises:
3 for each subnetwork a set of at least two ports,
4 the multi-bridge being operable to ~~register~~ record which of the ports
5 are used by a Virtual Local Area Network (VLAN), wherein the multi-bridge is
6 arranged to forward a data packet which is sent with an identifier that identifies
7 the VLAN to those of the ports that the VLAN is registered to use,
8 wherein the multi-bridge is operable to ~~register~~ record in a register
9 upon receiving a data packet by one of the at least two ports of a particular set,
10 that the VLAN identified by the identifier of the data packet uses the ports of the
11 particular set, at least when the multi-bridge has not yet registered recorded that
12 the VLAN identified by the identifier of the data packet uses the particular set on
13 which the data packet was received.

1 **2. (Original)** Multi-bridge according to claim 1, wherein the multi-bridge is
2 further operable to de-register on the at least two ports of each set that is
3 different from the set of which one of the at least two ports has received the data
4 packet, if needed, the VLAN over which that data packet is sent.

1 **3. (Original)** Multi-bridge according to claim 2, wherein the multi-bridge is
2 further operable to provide an alarm signal if within a predetermined time span
3 and by a predetermined number of times one VLAN is successively registered
4 and de-registered on one set.

1 **4. (Currently Amended)** Method for allocating a Virtual Local Area
2 Network (VLAN) to one set out of a number of such sets on a multi-bridge,
3 wherein each set comprises at least two ports for a subnetwork out of a plurality

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4 of such subnetworks which share the multi-bridge, wherein the method
5 comprises:
6 sending to one of the at least two ports of a set a data packet over a
7 VLAN; and
8 ~~registering~~ recording in a register the VLAN over which the data
9 packet is sent on each of the at least two ports of the set of which one of the at
10 least two ports has received the data packet.

1 **5. (Previously Presented) Method** according to claim 4, characterised in
2 that, the method further comprises:
3 de-registering on the at least two ports of each set that is different
4 from the set of which one of the at least two ports has received the data packet, if
5 needed, the VLAN over which that data packet is sent.

1 **6. (Original) Method** according to claim 4, wherein the method
2 comprises:
3 providing an alarm signal if within a predetermined time and by a
4 predetermined number of times one VLAN is successively registered and de-
5 registered on one set

1 **7. (Original) Network** comprising a multi-bridge according to claim 1.